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## Pharmacist-Patient Communication Techniques

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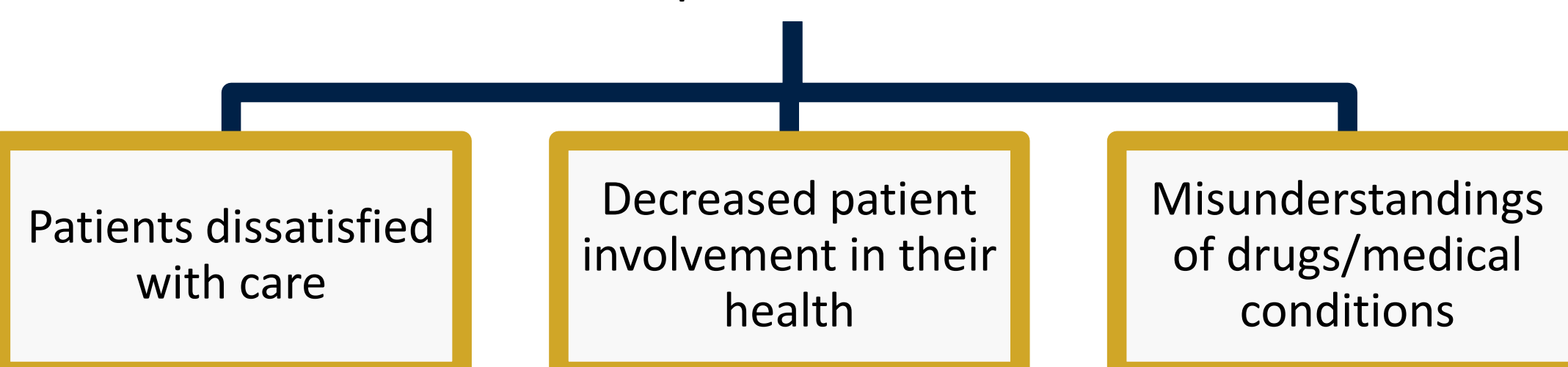
# Pharmacist-Patient Communication Techniques

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Sponsor: Anita N. Jacobson, PharmD.

## Background

Without effective patient communication: <sup>1,2,3</sup>



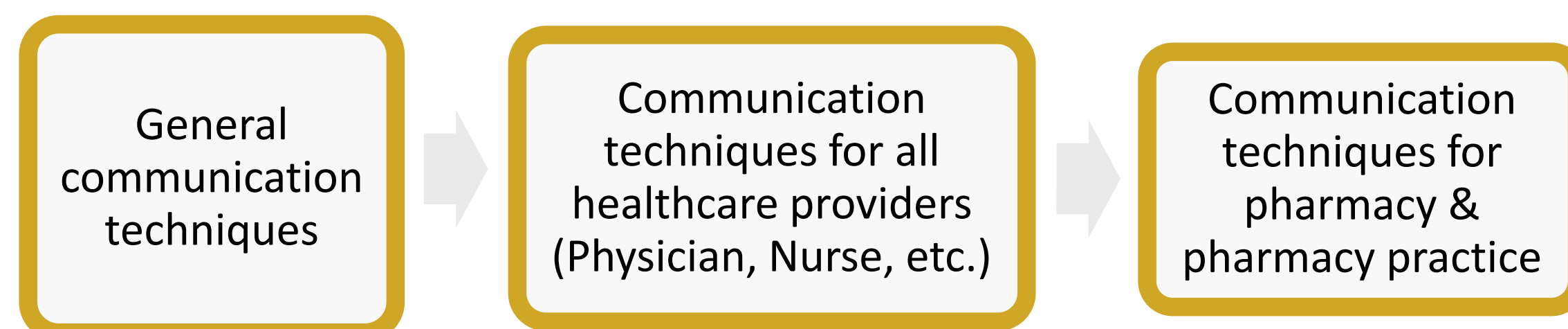
Effective patient communication is important to: <sup>1</sup>

- Enhance patient-provider relationships
- Create a safe/open atmosphere
- Improve transfer of medical information
- Improve medication adherence, health outcomes, and knowledge
- Help patients achieve positive outcomes

## Resources/Methods

Various systematic literary searches were conducted on multiple databases to find communication literature.

Search Strategy:



### Databases/Search Engines Searched:

- Communication Abstracts (EBSCOhost)
- ComDisDome (ProQuest)
- PubMed
- EMBASE
- American Pharmacist Association Library
- Access Pharmacy
- Google Search

### Search Terms:

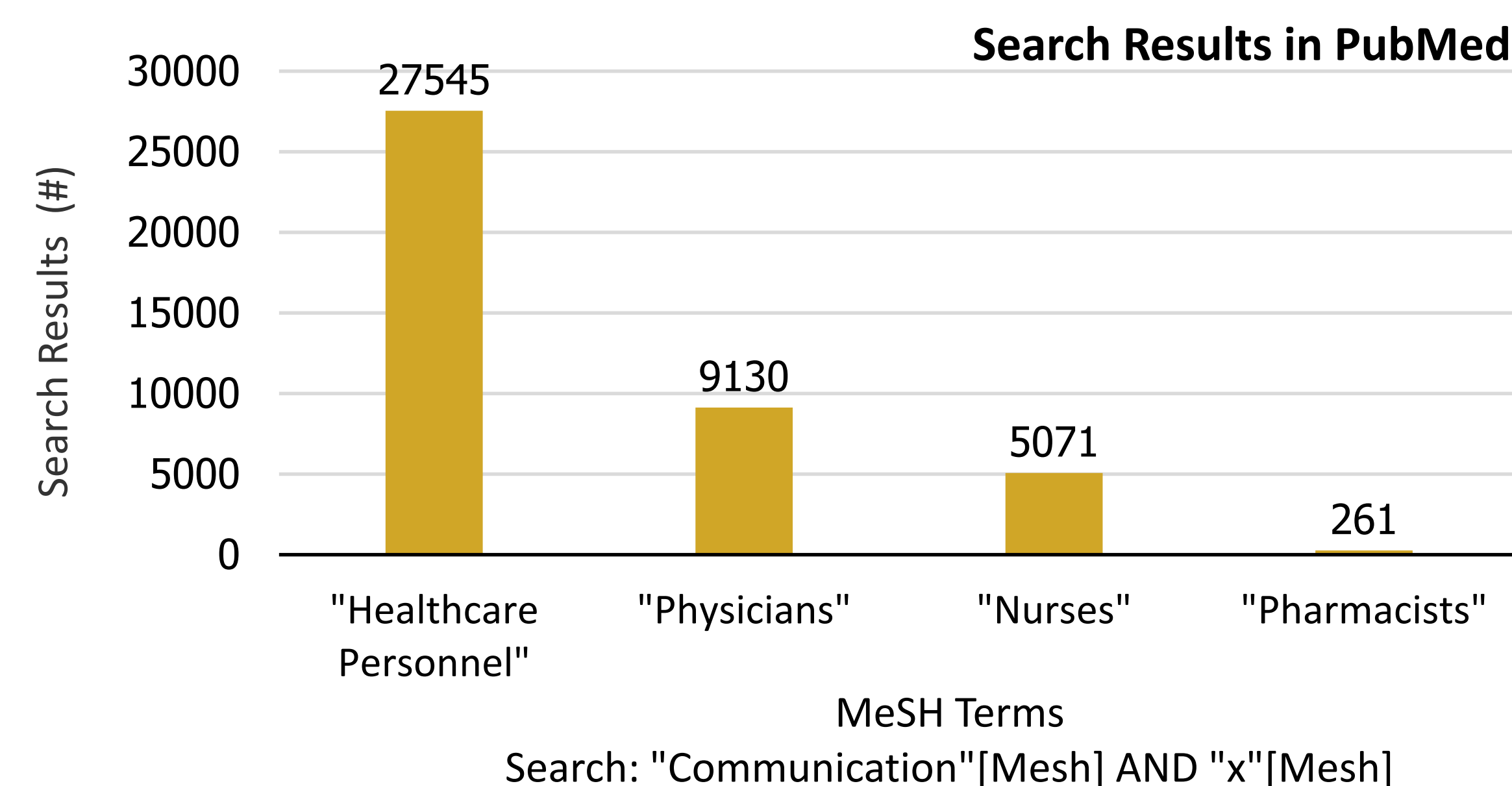
- Communication
- Interpersonal communication
- Oral communication
- Nonverbal communication
- Verbal communication
- Patient-centered care
- Motivational interviewing
- Pharmacy communication
- Cultural competency
- Health literacy

### Results narrowed to:

- Clinical trials and review articles
- Literature focusing on communication with patients, not between healthcare professionals
- Publications discussing topics relevant to pharmacy's role in healthcare
- Exclude replicated information

## Results

After a general PubMed search for patient-communication literature using MeSH terms ("healthcare personnel", "physicians", "nurses", and "pharmacists"), only 0.62% of the literature was related to pharmacists.



## Communication Techniques

Based on the lack of pharmacy guides available on patient communication, a toolkit was created with tips and techniques for pharmacists to employ while communicating with patients.

Verbal Communication Techniques	Nonverbal Communication Techniques
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Active Listening</li><li>• Open-ended Questions</li><li>• Consistent Referring</li><li>• Limiting Technical Medical Terms</li><li>• Caution with Humor</li><li>• Limiting Small Talk</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gesturing</li><li>• Maintaining Eye Contact</li><li>• Smiling</li><li>• Head Nodding</li><li>• Maintaining Open Posture<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Eye Level</li><li>• Forward lean</li><li>• Uncrossed arms</li></ul></li><li>• Being aware of Tone of Voice</li><li>• Being aware of personal space</li><li>• Being aware of sitting arrangement</li><li>• Considering Dress/Appearance</li></ul>
Communication Barriers	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Patient Derived</li><li>• Provider Derived</li><li>• Environment Derived</li><li>• Cultural Differences</li></ul>	
Education Communication Techniques	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Indian Health Service Model</li><li>• Teach-back</li></ul>	
Behavioral Change Communication Techniques	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Transtheoretical Model of Behavioral Change</li><li>• Motivational Interviewing</li></ul>	
Decision Making Communication Techniques	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shared Decision Making Model</li></ul>	
Patient Centered Communication Techniques	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Avoid dehumanizing patients</li></ul>	

## Discussion

With a lack of literature directed specifically to communication techniques in pharmacy practice, pharmacists must rely on literature directed towards other healthcare disciplines to procure information related to patient interactions.

**Utilizing communication techniques is imperative to create an effective relationship and environment to allow for productive conversations.**

**While having scientific knowledge of medications is an important aspect of being a pharmacist, it is equally important that pharmacists are able to communicate this information effectively to patients.**

**By helping patients understand their health and the value of medications through effective communication, pharmacists can affect patients' health outcomes and quality of life.**



### Literature Cited

1. Linn AJ, van-Weert JCM, Schouten BC, Smit EG, van-Bodegraven AA, van-Dijk L. Words that make pills easier to swallow: a communication typology to address practical and perceptual barriers to medication intake behavior. *Patient Prefer Adherence*. 2012;6:871-85. doi: 10.2147/PPA.S36195.
2. The Joint Commission. "What did the Doctor Say?:" Improving Health Literacy to Protect Patient Safety. 2007. URL: [https://www.jointcommission.org/assets/1/18/improving\\_health\\_literacy.pdf](https://www.jointcommission.org/assets/1/18/improving_health_literacy.pdf) [accessed: 2016 June 21].
3. Slatore CG, Cecere LM, Reinke LF, Ganzini L, Udris EM, Moss BR, et al. Patient-clinician communication: associations with important health outcomes among veterans with COPD. *Chest*. 2010;138:628-34.